

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-02 L-03 SS-15 SSO-00 /031 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/PAN:EJNADEAU:ZC
APPROVED BY ARA/PAN:EJNADEAU
-----190020 103734 /61
O 182352Z FEB 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 038263

CANALNEGS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: U.S. PANAMA TREATY NEGOTIATIONS: ACTIVITIES
REPORT

I.

THIS IS MESSAGE NO. 5 FROM THE DEPARTMENT APPLICABLE TO THE
FEBRUARY 1977 NEGOTIATIONS IN PANAMA, DESPATCHED FROM
ARA/PAN AT 5:30 P.M. ON FEBRUARY 18.

II. BRIEFING ITEMS

A. MEDIA COVERAGE - COVERAGE HAS BEEN LIGHT HERE BUT WE
ARE STARTING TO GET AP AND UPI WIRES FROM PANAMA RELATED
TO CODEL SLACK WHICH INCLUDE STATEMENTS BY INDIVIDUAL CON-
GRESSMEN MADE AFTER YOUR BRIEFING AND AT THE AIRPORT PRIOR
TO DEPARTURE. AS YOU ARE NO DOUBT AWARE, THESE SHOULD
GENERATE SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST. ALSO, HAD SOME CALLS FROM
WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINES AND WE CAN EXPECT SOME TIME AND
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NEWSWEEK COVERAGE IN THE NEXT WEEK'S EDITIONS.

WE DISCUSSED FOLLOWING EXCERPT FROM AP REPORT FROM
PANAMA AT ARA STAFF MEETING THIS MORNING AND CONCLUDED
THAT THE PANAMANIAN SPOKESMAN MAY BE A HIGHLY RELIABLE
SOURCE:

BEGIN QUOTE THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE GOING ALONG JUST FINE...
THE NEGOTIATORS ARE GOOD FRIENDS, THEY SPEND THE TIME
THEY'RE NOT NEGOTIATING EXCHANGING PLEASANTRIES, FISHING,
AND GAMBLING TOGETHER IN THE ISLAND'S LOCAL CASINOS.
UNQUOTE

B. AMERICAN LEGION - FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMISSION IS
HOLDING ANNUAL MID-WINTER MEETING IN WASHINGTON. AT
LAST MINUTE THEY REQUESTED STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TO
MAKE BRIEF PRESENTATION AND ANSWER QUESTIONS ON PANAMA.
WE HOPED TO HAVE AMBASSADOR TODMAN OR MR. BRAY MAKE
THE PRESENTATION, BUT NEITHER ARE AVAILABLE BECAUSE OF
AN IG ON LATIN AMERICAN PRM WHICH IS SCHEDULED FOR THE
ONLY TIME AVAILABLE (9:30 A.M. 2/22). LEGION STILL
WANTED TO GO AHEAD, SO WE PLAN THAT GUTHRIE WILL MAKE
AN OFF THE RECORD PRESENTATION WITH NADEAU AND MERRICK
AVAILABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS.

C. AMBASSADOR LINOWITZ - A STATEMENT REFUTING AMBASSADOR
LINOWITZ' ALLEGED CONNECTION WITH THE ALLENDE REGIME HAS
BEEN PREPARED BASED ON HIS GUIDANCE AND COMMENTS BY HIS
LAW FIRM. IT HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO APPROXIMATELY 8
STAFFERS IN CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES WHO CALLED TODAY AND
YESTERDAY.

WE ALSO PREPARED A Q & A FOR THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN
ON THE NEGOTIATIONS AS FOLLOWS:

BEGIN QUOTE Q: THE PANAMANIAN'S ARE REPORTED TO BE
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SAYING THE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS ARE GOING WELL. DOES THE
U.S. SHARE THAT VIEW?

A: IT REMAINS DEPARTMENT POLICY TO REFRAIN FROM COMMENT
ON THE NEGOTIATIONS WHILE THEY ARE UNDERWAY END QUOTE

NO QUESTIONS WERE ASKED TODAY ON PANAMA.

ACTION ITEMS

A. WE UNDERSTAND AMBASSADORS BUNKER AND/OR LINOWITZ
HAVE TENTATIVELY AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN FOREIGN
POLICY BRIEFING FOR HOUSE FRESHMEN BEING ARRANGED
BY H FOR MORNING FEBRUARY 24. PLEASE ADVISE IF IT
BECOMES NECESSARY TO CANCEL PARTICIPATION.

B. WE WILL NEED TO PROVIDE A RESPONSE TO THE WHITE
HOUSE ON THE HOFFMAN LETTER OF 2/23. IF YOU WISH
TO COMMENT, WE WILL NEED A CABLE OR CALL NLT 2/22.

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